

## **CHAIR**

### **Rugby Football League (RFL), RL Commercial & Super League (Europe) (SLE)**

#### **Leading the future of Rugby League in the UK**

The Rugby Football League (RFL) is the national governing body for Rugby League in the United Kingdom. It is responsible for governing, developing, and promoting the sport at all levels. The RFL administers major competitions such as the Betfred Super League and the Challenge Cup, manages the England national team, and supports grassroots and community development to grow the game.

SLE is the highest level of the British rugby league system comprising of 14 clubs following an exciting expansion for the 2026 season.

RL Commercial, established in 2023 as a joint venture by the RFL and SLE consolidates all commercial rights across every level of Rugby League.

Rugby League has a long, proud heritage and is a sport with deep cultural significance, strong community roots, and a clear ambition for growth at both the professional and grassroots levels. The RFL leads the sport's development, participation, governance, and regulatory framework while championing its values and driving long-term impact across clubs, communities, and the wider game.

These organisations are entering an important phase of evolution whereby it will realign the companies under one Group structure. This realignment will enable greater strategic clarity between its participation, performance, regulatory, and commercial functions.

Against this backdrop, we are seeking to appoint a Chair to lead the Boards and help guide the organisations through its next chapter of strategic and operational development bringing together the Executive structures and businesses to ensure alignment, consistency and drive commercial growth.

The Chair will work closely with the Chief Executive, the Executives and the other Non-Executive Directors to devise and implement a strategic plan for the sport based on the findings of the recently concluded Club-Led Strategic Review with the goal of providing short-term and long-term stability and commercial growth.

The successful candidate will demonstrate the gravitas and credibility to deliver a compelling commercial vision which brings together all stakeholders. They must be a problem solver who can lead the sport and its complicated stakeholder group to drive forward the changes and strategy that are agreed upon.

They must have a deep understanding of the sport and structure of Rugby League and its stakeholder group.

This is a high-profile, front-facing role requiring a leader with board-level and sport credibility, strong commercial acumen, and the ability to operate confidently across a complex, high-interest sport environment. They will demonstrate strategic vision, leadership and negotiating credibility. They will be a natural collaborator, capable of building effective relationships within and outside Rugby League with high levels of political sensitivity, diplomacy and judgement so they can offer excellent ambassadorial and networking skills.

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## **Key Responsibilities**

- Provide authoritative leadership to the Boards, ensuring strong governance, transparency, and alignment with the organisation's strategic objectives
  - Guide strategic direction across participation, performance pathways, regulation, and the sport's wider development
  - Guide strategic direction for commercial growth
  - Offer constructive challenge and support to the Chief Executive and senior leadership team and help navigate the Board and Executive through complicated strategic decisions
  - Oversee financial discipline, risk frameworks, organisational assurance, and Board effectiveness
  - Represent Rugby League and the Boards as an ambassador at the highest levels, engaging with government, commercial partners, clubs, media, and national/international stakeholders
  - Build strong, trusted relationships across the sport, shaping confidence in the RFL's leadership and long-term direction
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### What We Are Looking For

The RFL is seeking an Chair who can lead the sport with rigorous governance experience, and strong commercial judgement. Candidates should demonstrate:

- Deep understanding and knowledge of the sport of Rugby League and its stakeholders.
  - An understanding of the sports industry, or the ability to quickly acquire sector insight; experience in highly regulated, entertainment, or membership-based environments is advantageous
  - Significant experience in Board leadership, ideally as Chair or Senior Independent Director
  - Proven commercial acumen and financial literacy, with the ability to support the sport's growth agenda and maximise value from strategic partnerships
  - A strategic thinker with a proven track record of delivering change and growth in sporting organisations
  - Confidence in a high-profile, external-facing role with senior stakeholders, including government, media, sponsors, and clubs
  - Strong understanding of governance, risk, organisational performance, and Board evaluation
  - Sound judgement, political awareness, and the ability to navigate a diverse and passionate stakeholder landscape to maintain the confidence of the sport's stakeholders.
  - A collaborative leadership style that builds trust and strengthens the Board's effectiveness
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### Key Details

**Time commitment:** Approximately 100 days per year, plus attendance at some matches and key events

**Location:** RFL Headquarters, Etihad Campus, Manchester (location flexible)

**Term:** Three-year initial term; Non-Executive Directors may serve up to a maximum of nine years

**Remuneration:** £TBC per annum plus expenses

The organisations are committed to building a Board that is diverse and representative of the communities Rugby League serves. Applications are strongly encouraged from candidates from

under-represented groups across gender, race, disability, sexuality, socio-economic background, and other characteristics.

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**Apply now to help shape the next chapter of one of the UK's most respected sports.**

To apply for the role of Chair, please send your CV and covering letter briefly explaining your interest in and suitability for the role to our **Recruitment Consultants CLOVER HR**, email:

[diane.southwick@cloverhr.co.uk](mailto:diane.southwick@cloverhr.co.uk)

If you would like a confidential conversation about the role, in the first instance please contact **Diane Southwick of CLOVER HR** on **0330 175 6601**

*Please note that any applications received by the RFL will be forwarded directly to CLOVER HR for review.*